

MENTAL HEALTH AWARENESS TRAINING

Newsletter: Quarter 3 / Issue 3 / August 2026



OUR MISSION

The National Latino Behavioral Health Association (NLBHA) was established to fill a need for a unified national voice for Latino populations in behavioral health.

NLBHA's Mental Health Awareness Training (MHAT) Program plays a crucial role in promoting mental health education, reducing stigma, and connecting individuals to vital resources.

MHAT prepares individuals and communities to safely and appropriately respond to persons experiencing mental health challenges.

All MHAT training courses offer NAADAC approved CEU's, and because these training courses are SAMHSA sponsored, they are free to the public and meet SAMHSA's fidelity standards. All trainings are offered via Zoom, giving access to the most rural communities in the State.



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QUOTE “DICHO” OF THE QUARTER

SPA – “Tu gran fuerza es saber quién eres.”

ENG – “Your great strength is knowing who you are.” ~ **Oscar de la Renta**

Our interpretation: This quote reflects the importance of embracing one's cultural roots, family history, and values as sources of identity, resilience, and pride.

International Overdose Awareness Day

Each year on **August 31**, International Overdose Awareness Day brings communities together to remember those who have lost their lives to overdose, support individuals and families affected by substance use, and strengthen efforts to prevent future deaths. SAMHSA recognizes the observance as an opportunity to increase awareness, reduce stigma, and encourage meaningful action toward overdose prevention and response.

Education and preparedness can help save lives. Knowing how to recognize the signs of an overdose, contacting emergency services, and understanding how to use opioid overdose reversal medications such as naloxone are important steps individuals and communities can take. **SAMHSA's Overdose Prevention and Response Toolkit** provides practical guidance on overdose risks, warning signs, prevention strategies, opioid overdose reversal medications, and steps to take when responding to a suspected overdose.

This August 31, take time to learn, share resources, and help create a community where people affected by substance use are met with compassion and support. Together, greater awareness and preparedness can make a life-saving difference.



International Overdose Awareness Day also reminds us that **overdose prevention is a shared community responsibility.** By promoting harm reduction, expanding access to naloxone, encouraging compassionate conversations about substance use, and connecting people with treatment and recovery resources, communities can reduce stigma and create safer, more supportive environments for everyone affected.

Find more resources and this year's IOAD Toolkit at
<https://www.samhsa.gov/about/digital-toolkits/overdose-awareness-week>

2026 National Latino Behavioral Health Conference

September 9-11 | Albuquerque, NM



For Information scan the QR code or visit or <https://nlbha.org>



National Latino Behavioral Health Association **NLBHA**

The 2026 National Latino Behavioral Health Conference, taking place September 9–11 in Albuquerque, New Mexico, offers an opportunity for behavioral health professionals and leaders to strengthen their knowledge and skills in supporting Latino mental health. Hosted by the National Latino Behavioral Health Association (NLBHA), the conference brings together practitioners, social workers, psychologists, community health workers, peer specialists, policymakers, and leaders committed to improving behavioral health outcomes.

Through workshops in both English and Spanish and plenary sessions, participants will explore evidence-based practices, community-defined approaches, and traditional healing practices. These sessions reinforce culturally and linguistically responsive mental health services while expanding the tools professionals use to recognize behavioral health needs and connect individuals and families with appropriate support.

Several conference workshops build on themes found throughout MHAT offerings, giving participants opportunities to deepen their knowledge of culturally responsive care, stigma reduction, trauma-informed practice, and community resilience.

These connections make the conference a valuable next step for MHAT participants who want to expand on skills and concepts introduced through NLBHA trainings. Full three-day conference attendance offers approximately 15 CE NAADAC credits for behavioral health professionals, as well as up to 9 CME APA credits for eligible physicians. Attendees are encouraged to review the Full Agenda to explore additional workshops, speakers, and learning opportunities throughout the conference: <https://nlbha.org/2026agenda/>



Circles of Care

at Rio Arriba Detention Center



Melisha Montañó, CPSW, CHPS, COAPS, IFPRS
Project Coordinator, NLBHA

Facilitating a series of "Circles of Care" suicide prevention presentations at the Rio Arriba Detention Center has been a powerful reminder that hope has no boundaries. From the moment we arrive, the administrator and her staff welcomes the NLBHA team with compassion, professionalism, and a genuine commitment to the well-being of those in their care. Their trust and partnership create space for meaningful conversations that can change lives.

The heartfelt stories shared by the detainees are a powerful reminder that behind every person is a story, a struggle, and a hope for something better. Their openness and thirst for connection show how deeply important Circles of Care is within the detention center.

Through peer support and lived experience, we bring more than resources—we bring understanding, connection, and hope. These pláticas remind individuals they are not defined by their circumstances, that healing and recovery are possible, and that their lives have value and purpose.

NLBHA is honored to walk alongside the staff and participants, bringing resources and hope where they are needed most. Every person deserves to be heard, every story matters, and every person deserves a shot at life, and that *Suicide is Preventable*.



 [/COVNLBHA](https://www.facebook.com/COVNLBHA)

Melisha Montañó is a Certified Peer Support Worker with advanced training in forensic peer recovery, healthcare privacy and security, and providing older adults with peer support.

PROGRAM HIGHLIGHT

Career Pathways



Creating Pathways of Hope, Growth, and Opportunity for Youth

Being part of NLBHA's **Career Pathways Program**, funded by the Northern New Mexico Youth Fund, has been one of the most meaningful experiences in my work. This journey has reminded me that when we invest in young people, provide guidance, and create opportunities for growth, we help them recognize their strengths and envision possibilities for their future.

Throughout this program, I have had the privilege of supporting youth as they develop skills in prevention, behavioral health, career readiness, and professional development. I have facilitated trainings on **Introduction to the Strategic Prevention Framework, Prevention 101, Canva, and Microsoft Office (Word, PowerPoint, and Excel)** while watching students grow, not only in their technical abilities, but also in their confidence, leadership, and belief in themselves.



Elizabeth Rodriguez Diaz, BA
Project Coordinator

One of the most rewarding parts of this experience has been witnessing students step forward, share their ideas, challenge themselves, and recognize the value of their voices. I am deeply grateful to our mentors and host sites who welcomed our students, shared their knowledge, and helped create meaningful work-based learning experiences.

I am honored to have supported these young leaders as they build their pathways forward. Witnessing their growth, confidence, and determination has been one of the greatest rewards of this work.



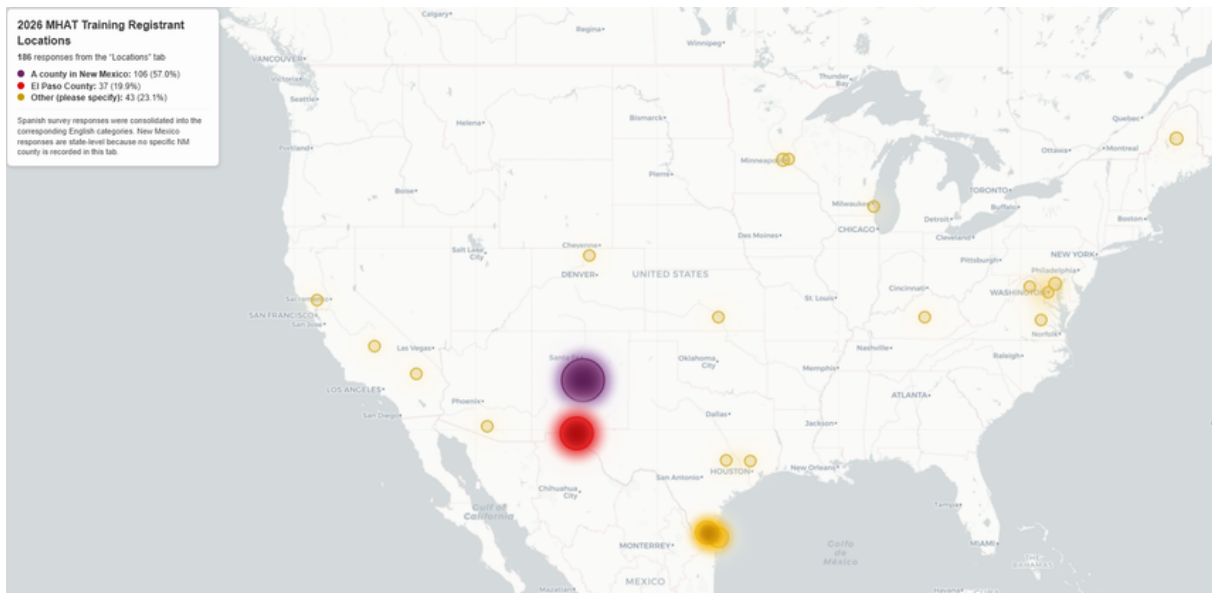
Youth Celebration Day at Hyde Park

Youth-led station where Career Pathways youth employees showcased the skills and experiences they developed through the program.

The MHAT Impact



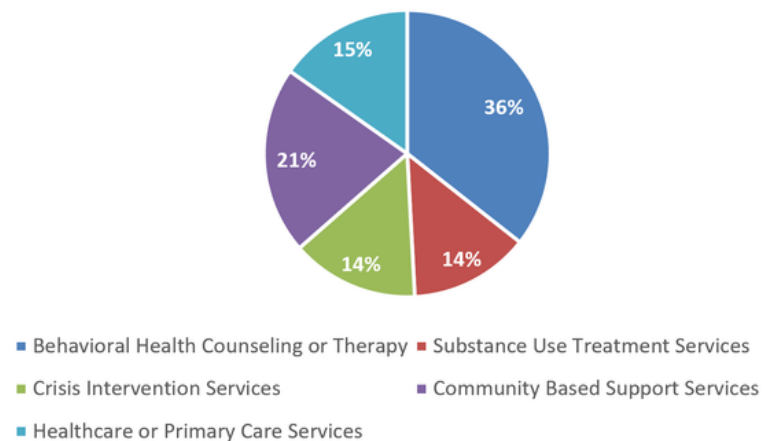
NLBHA's Mental Health Awareness Training (MHAT) program continues to expand behavioral health knowledge and strengthen connections to critical resources across communities. This fiscal year so far, NLBHA has trained approximately **300 participants**, helping professionals and community members build the skills needed to recognize and respond to mental health and substance use concerns. Among those who completed the post-test survey and training evaluation, 57% were located in New Mexico counties, 20% in El Paso County, Texas, and 23% represented other communities across the United States.



The impact of MHAT extends beyond the trainings themselves. To date, trainees reported providing **307 referrals** to individuals in need of behavioral health and supportive services. Behavioral health counseling or therapy represented the largest share of referrals at 36%, followed by community-based support services at 21%, healthcare or primary care services at 15%, substance use treatment services at 14%, and crisis intervention services at 14%.

These outcomes demonstrate how MHAT equips trainees to recognize behavioral health needs, respond appropriately, and connect individuals and families with essential community resources.

Types of Service Referrals



UPCOMING TRAININGS & EVENTS



2026 National Latino Behavioral Health Conference *Workshop Highlights*



Escucha Tus Emociones: A Community-Driven Approach to Increasing Access to Emotional Healing in Latinx Communities

Presented by Cecilia Eva Tenorio, M.B.E. and Ana Paula Soares, MS, LPC, CCTP

¡Juntos Podemos Sanar!: Ethical and Biocultural Considerations for Integrating Traditional Healing Across Latino Behavioral Health Systems

Presented by Thomas A. Chavez, PhD

Resilience in Practice: Thriving in the Work We Are Called To

Presented by Dr. Craig Pierce, PhD, LPCC, LMFT

Rooted in Community, Guided by Learning.

See our upcoming trainings and [reserve your spot!](#)

August 6, 2026 9AM-10:30AM MDT	Talk Saves Lives – En Español <u>Register Here</u>
August 20, 2026 9AM-10:30AM MDT	Trauma-Informed Care: Foundations for Practice <u>Register Here</u>
September 1, 2026 9AM-10:30AM MDT	Trauma-Informed Care: Advanced Methods in Practice <u>Register Here</u>
September 22, 2026 9AM-10:30AM MDT	Understanding ACEs & Building Resilience <u>Register Here</u>

MHAT Contact Information

Susie Villalobos, Ed.D, M.Ed., CCTS-I

Senior Director, NLBHA
Training/Technical Assistance &
Professional Development
Susiev@nlbha.org

Elizabeth Rodriguez Diaz, BA

Project Coordinator, NLBHA
Elizabeth@nlbha.org

AC Butman, MCPC

Program Specialist, NLBHA
AC@nlbha.org

SAMHSA Resources

988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline

- Text, Call, or Chat 988lifeline.org
- Available 24/7
- Disaster Distress Support
- 200+ local crisis contact centers at FindTreatment.gov

988 en Español

- Texto “AYUDA” a 988
- Llamar al 988, pulsar 2
- Chat en linea988.org

SAMHSA’s National Helpline:

1-800-622-HELP (4357)



nlbha.org



[MHAT Program](#)



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[Helpline Resources](#)



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2026 **REGISTRATION** *OPEN*
National Latino Behavioral Health Conference
September 9-11, 2026 | Albuquerque, NM

 **25 YEAR ANNIVERSARY**

[WWW.NLBHA.ORG](https://www.nlbha.org)

